(d) what will be the life of the said Committees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a)

Telecom

Nominations to the TACs is made by the Government after considering the recommendations received from Heads of Telecom. Circles/ Telephone Districts alongwith other names received directly in the Directorate and the Ministers' Secretariats.

Nominations for MPs are made in consultation with the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. *Postal*

The criteria/guidelines for nominating Members of Postal Advisory Committees for various Circles are as follows:

(i) The Postmasters General recommend to the Directorate names representing the various interests after consulting the Civic Body or any association representing press, trade and commerce, industry, medical profession etc.

(ii) Recommendations/nominations are obtained by the Post Masters General from the State Government/Union Territory and presiding officers of the

State Legislative to represent the State Government /Union Territory & State Legislative, as the case may be, and forwarded to the Directorate.

(iii) Nominations for M.Ps are obtained from the Department of Parliamentary Affairs.

Nominations to the Advisory Committees are made by the Government after considering the recommendations received from the Postmasters General alongwith the other names received directly.

(b) *Telecom*

Members of TAC are provided with free service telephone connections with 1200 free calls on a bi-monthly basis.

They are entitled to claim TA/DA as admissible to them for attending the meetings of the Committees.

Postal

(i) Non-official Members are paid T.A. and D.A. at the rate admissible from time to time.

(ii) The functions of the Committees are purely advisory but the Head of Circle considers all suggestions and recommendations made by the Members of the Committee and tries to implement them to the extent possible.

(c) *Telecom*

The tenure of Assam TAC has expired recently on 31.1.1989. It is under process of reconstitution.

Guwahati Telephone Advisory Committee has already been reconstituted upto 31.5.1989.

Postal

The Postal Advisory Committee for Assam Circle (NEI) is likely to be reconstituted soon.

(d) *Telecom*

The tenure of each TAC is two years.

Postal

The normal term of the Committee is two years or till it is reconstituted whichever is later.

Telex connection to Assam gas company limited

502. SHRI JERLIE E. TARIANG: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Assam Gas Commpany Limited, Duliajan applied for a telex connection from Dibrugarh/Tinsukia Telex Exchanges about l1/2 years back;

(b) whether the company has been given the telex connection; if so, when;

(c) if the connection has not yet been given, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when the said connection will be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF "COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) It is technically not feasible as the distance involved from Tinsukia Telex Exchange is about 35 Kms.

(d) It is likely to be provided in 1991 when the proposed UHF System is installed.

Higher phone rentals

503. SHRI K.V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the phone rentals in India are the highest in the world;

(b) whether such steep rental charges are making the telephone beyond the reach of middle classes and retired people;

(c) what steps are proposed to bring the phones within the reach of the middle classes and the retired people; and

(d) what are the reasons for steadily increasing the rentals and ball charges whereas the technology has made it possible to reduce the charges world-wide?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Telephone charges in India are not the highest in the World. The charges for various telecommunication services are higher in a number of countries as compared to those in India.

(b) The tariff for various telecom, facilities has been fixed such that the increase in telephone tariff is below the increase in the wholesale price index.

Even after the increases in tariff from December, 1986 and April 1988 demand from public for Telephone has continued to increase from 44.3 lakhs in Nov., 1986 to 50.6 lakhs by April, 1988 and to 53.3 lakhs by September, 1988.

(c) The policy of the Deptt. has been to increase the number of public telephones so that they are accessible to a larger section of people.

(d) The increase in tariff became necessary primarily to meet the rising operational and maintenance cost of the telephone system and to raise resources for development outlays and introduction of new technologies. The rental has been revised from 1.4.1988 after a lapse of 6 years. While increasing the call charges from December, 1986, the 'limit of free calls admissible in a bimonthly period has been increased from 200 to 275.

Rates of STD calls

504. SHRI **K.V.** THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the delay in reducing the charges for STD calls during night time;

(b) whether the proposal mooted earlier has been abandoned;

(c) whether it is a fact that in all foreign countries different rates are charged for different hours for STD calls; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons for the inability of Government to effect such positive changes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Technical arrangements have to be made in all the Trunk Auto exchanges and some of the.telephone exchanges also for effecting any change in tariff.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Reduced tariff during night time is already available. Between 7 P.M. and 8